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OTHER MEN HAVE LABORED:

A SERMON

Preached December 7th, 1879,

BY

REV. CALVIN S. LOCKE,

A MEMBER OF THE THIRD PARISH IN DEDHAM.

Published by Request.

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PRINTED BY HUGH H. McQUILLEN.

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DISCOURSE.

OTHER MEN HAVE LABORED: YE HAVE ENTERED INTO THEIR LABORS.—JOHN IV: 58.

ONE hundred and fifty years ago, the thirty or forty families living in this part of the town went to meeting in a building standing on the site of the one now occupied by the First Parish in Dedham. Those who were in affluent circumstances rode, perhaps, in chaises, while others went on horseback, ladies riding behind their husband or brothers on pillions, while others still, wended their way on foot, back and forth, through the majestic oaks and maples and chestnuts of the primeval forest. The homes which they left were different from ours. A huge fire-place, capable of receiving on its heavy andirons' logs four feet long, occupied a part of one side of the living-room. Sometimes this fire-place was large enough to have a seat within its limits, where the children could sit and catch a glimpse of the stars passing overhead, or hear the snow hissing through the smoke, or pop corn and roast chestnuts in the ashes; or, if inclined to learn, study their arithmetic by the blaze of a pine knot, while other members of the family mended, knit and sewed, by the dim light of a tallow candle.* Near

*I am informed that kitchens were also lit by a *hake*, (provincial English for hook.) This consisted of a wooden crane fastened above the fire-place. From the end of the crane hung a notched iron rod on which an iron bowl containing grease might be raised or lowered. A wick lay in the bowl and thus a lamp was furnished, very convenient for change of position, but perhaps more primitive in form and construction than the ancient ones exhumed at Cyprus.

Another local word, *whicher*, (orthography uncertain), means a hut constructed of poles brought together at the top and covered with sods.

the fireplace stood the dye-tub where the yarn was colored for the frocks and the stockings. Connected with the chimney was the huge oven, which every Saturday was well heated, and yielded to the good housewife a rich store of brown bread, and pies, and baked beans. On a crane in the fire-place hung kettles in which meat and vegetables were boiled. Coals raked out upon the hearth served for broiling or frying, and a Dutch oven or kettle with a concave cover for receiving coals was used for occasional baking, and the roasting-jack cooked the beef or turkey for Thanksgiving dinner, or perhaps more frequently the fowl was suspended by a cord before the fire, and the luscious gravy distilled into a dripping-pan beneath. There were no matches to light the fire in the morning. At night the glowing back log was carefully covered with ashes, and usually furnished a fine bed of coals as the day began. If by accident the fire was extinguished, the only resource was to send to a neighbor for a dish of live coals, or to have recourse to the aggravating process of striking fire with steel, flint and tinder. Looking about the kitchen, you saw the large wheel on which the mother or older daughters spun the wool which the father and sons had carded into rolls, the small wheel with a treadle, on which an aged aunt or grandmother spun the flax for sheets and towels, and in the rear a loom on which the cloth for the family was woven. At one end was the cupboard, or, as it was sometimes called, the dresser, on which stood the shining pewter plates and tankards, with possibly a few pieces of earthen ware. Overhead, at certain seasons of the year, hung festoons of quartered apples or circles of pumpkins, and in a room near by you could see the long rows of cheeses, objects of housewifely care and pride. Over the fireplace hung the powder-horn, shot-bag and musket, ready for use against prowling foxes, wolves, or Indians, or more pleasantly employed against the deer, rabbits and partridges; while, perhaps on some quaint three-legged stand lay the family bible, almost

the only book in the household. From these plain dwellings, homes of hard work, of unremitting industry and close economy, your ancestors and their New England contemporaries went to the house of worship with an effort which we cannot realize, and with a constancy and interest which we should do well to emulate.

In Dedham, they went to a meeting-house, the second built on or near the same site, which is described as being "a singular structure," with its double row of galleries; a raised platform with seats along the north and south walls; the floor also occupied with seats, a few pews only being erected at the sides. There was a platform, as it is expressed, "above the outside covering," or roof. A cupola or rude turret rose from the centre, surmounted, not by a steeple proper, but by a short pole or staff, as it appeared to the eye, serving merely to support a vane. The bell was rung by a person standing in the body-seats, or in the aisle between them, in the central part of the house below. There was no ceiling above, nor were the sides plastered, and the whole interior seemed to be studded with spars. Four persons occupied the deacons' seat in front of the pulpit, and the deacons' wives had a special place assigned them in another part of the church. "At three corners of the house were staircases leading to the galleries." The lower gallery on the north was "for women and lads," the gallery above for "young women and maids," the south gallery for men, and the seats in the lower part of the house were parted in the middle by an aisle,—the men to be ranged on one side, and the women on the other.—[Dr. Lamson's Sermon, preached the Sunday after fortieth anniversary of his ordination, pp. 33 and 34.]

Boys at that time were sometimes troublesome, and seats were constructed for them, at different times, in different parts of the house, some of them in the aisles, and some at the foot of the pulpit stairs, where they could be watched over. In many meeting-houses, constables or tithingmen were

employed to keep the boys in order and the people awake. Each constable had a wand with a hare's foot on one end, and a hare's tail on the other. "If any woman went to sleep, the constable touched her on the forehead with the hare's tail, but if a small boy nodded, he was rapped with the other end not quite so gently." Services were sometimes three or four hours long, the sexton turning the hour-glass before the minister at the end of every hour. The congregation was expected to stand during the prayer, which sometimes continued thirty or forty minutes. The hymns were given out line by line by a deacon, and sung by the congregation. "The whole number of tunes known to the people did not exceed ten, and few congregations could go beyond five." The extreme strictness which prevailed in many settlements never existed in Dedham, whose inhabitants seem from the first to have been rather liberal in their religious views, and inclined to grant considerable personal freedom to those whom they, by vote of the town, admitted to their number. In many places people were not allowed to stay at home from religious services. Men were fined for every unnecessary absence, and if they staid away a month together, they might be put into stocks, or into a wooden cage.—[Higginson's Young Folks History, p. 76.]

About 160 years ago, the people in the south part of the town, now Norwood, and in the part where we live, became uneasy at the inconvenience of going to meeting in Dedham. The violent dissensions which then prevailed in the Dedham church may also have exerted a disturbing influence. At various times from 1717 till 1728, petitions were presented from citizens in this part of the town, requesting to be freed from paying the minister in Dedham, that they might have preaching among themselves. In May, 1728, money was granted by the town to support preaching in the southerly part, and perhaps under this grant meetings for religious worship were held in the house now inhabited by Newton and David Ellis, near Ellis station. The first house on Sum-

mer street, now nearly in ruins, and owned by Mr. Henry Draper, formerly by Mr. Lemuel Gay, was used as a place of worship by the first members of the Episcopal church in this town, who, in consequence of a petition presented March 18th, 1734, had part of the tax payable to the pastor of the first church remitted. The action of the town setting off the south and west portions of it as a parish or precinct was confirmed by the General Court in 1730. The great subject of discussion among those who inhabited this place one hundred and fifty years ago, was where the meeting-house should be located. So great was the difference of opinion on this matter, that in 1733 the inhabitants of West Dedham separated from those in South Dedham, and returned to the "Old Precinct." The agitation for a distinct society, however, continued. The frame of a meeting-house had been erected as early as 1731, not far from the house now occupied by Mr. Greenwood Fuller, on land given by Mr. Joseph Ellis, whose descendants of the fourth, fifth and sixth generations we still number among our congregation. This frame was purchased and roughly covered. A church was organized January 4, 1735, and Rev. Josiah Dwight was installed as pastor, and had for his residence the east part of the house of Greenwood Fuller, which tradition reports was purchased and finished off by the parish for this purpose. The members of the old parish were unfavorable to the separation, and did not comply with the invitation to be present at the installation of Mr. Dwight. And it was not till January 10th, 1736, that, after a struggle of twenty years, an act of incorporation was passed, giving this parish a distinct existence. After the first meeting-house had been occupied for nearly three-quarters of a century, it became necessary to make large repairs or to build a new house. Which course to take and where to locate the house were questions which violently excited the society, and almost equally divided it. The majority, however, decided to build a house on the spot where we now worship. Others withdrew and began the formation of what is now the Baptist society.

Mr. Aaron Baker, a carpenter, purchased the old house, and disposed of it to the seceding members, who moved it to the place on which it now stands, and fitted it for their own use. This meeting-house had a gallery, a high pulpit with sounding-board above it, three aisles and square pews. The upper portion of the panel of the pews was made of open work by the insertion of upright turned pieces of wood which may have been nine inches long, and set six inches apart. The seats were raised when the congregation stood during the long prayer, and their noisy downfall probably marked the one supreme moment of the day to the younger portion of the audience. Chairs stood in the pews for the use of older members of the family.

On the 26th of February, 1809, seventy years ago last February, Rev. Mr. Thacher delivered a discourse on taking leave of the ancient house, and on the subsequent Sunday the new house was dedicated, ministers from the South and First Parish taking part in the exercises. I quote from the former discourse a passage, both as a specimen of Mr. Thacher's style and as pertinent to the present occasion :

"We are already informed," he says, "that this house has stood for seventy-eight years. Not a head which planned, nor a hand employed in building it, but what has long been mouldering in the dust. Very few, either in the parish or town, now survive, who then existed : nor is there a single person now living who was then the head of a family. Of those who signed the first church covenant, one only was alive after my settlement in this place. The same has been dead for more than a quarter of a century. Since the above-named period, what numbers in this considerable hamlet have been born, formed connexions, and expired ! Families then the most flourishing and prosperous in this parish, long since blasted by misery and depression, by their remains, give us an affecting picture,—*of man born to few days and full of trouble*. And though this place be more stationary than any within my knowledge, as to the sameness of names and families, houses and inclosures, yet, were the first settlers to rise from the grave, they could scarcely trace out their former residence and situation."

This house which we now occupy, an elegant one if we consider the time when it was erected, and a substantial one if we consider how well it has sustained the violence of the winds to which its elevated situation exposes it, stands on land given by Deacon Ichabod Ellis, (three-quarters of an acre) and by Mr. Newell Ellis, (one-quarter of an acre.) The first bell was the gift of Hon. Joshua Fisher of Beverly, and the pulpit was decorated by the ladies of the parish, at the expense of seventy dollars.* Although the society was weakened by the secession of a part of its members, and had recently borne the heavy expense of erecting a new building, it took early measures shortly afterwards to ensure its perpetual existence on or very near the spot where we now worship, by the establishment of a fund. In 1811, about \$2000 was subscribed by members of the parish. Three thousand dollars were added by the bequest of Hon. Joshua Fisher, and at the decease of Rev. Thomas Thacher, his real and personal estate fell to the parish. In 1836 the money value of the fund was \$5252.82. By the liberal bequest of Mr. Lusher Gay the fund was largely increased in 1866, and is now \$15,606.66. The interior of the church, dedicated in 1809, probably remained without much alteration till the year 1855. At that time the floor was about two feet lower than at present. The pulpit, although it had twice been lowered, was very high, and was reached on each side by formidable flights of stairs. The floor of the house was occupied by oblong pews. Stoves were put in this meeting-house not before the fall of 1817. Previous to that time, both in the old building and this, heated bricks and foot-stoves containing pans of coals, were the only heating apparatus which your ancestors used during the long Sunday services. During the summer and autumn of 1855, repairs (costing \$1230.30) were carried on

*For this bell a larger one was substituted in 1838, and the difference in value, \$200, was paid by Deacon John Richards.

under the direction of a committee chosen by the parish, services being held meanwhile in Nahatan Hall. The floor was raised; a lower and more elegant pulpit was substituted for the old, and the scattered, uncomfortable and uncomely pews were exchanged for the concentric seats, which both bring the members of the congregation nearer one another, and face to face with the minister; the bare walls and ceiling were handsomely frescoed; and it is worthy of note that these repairs were accomplished without the alienation of a single member, and that they gave general satisfaction. The Ladies' Benevolent Society carpeted, cushioned and otherwise furnished the church at an expense of \$577.68. At the same time "Hymns for the Church of Christ" was substituted for Greenwood's collection. Recently the Hymn and Service Book, published by the American Unitarian Association, has been introduced. The new horse-sheds were built in 1869, and a portion of woodland belonging to the parish was sold to pay for their erection. In 1854 the choir consisted of persons who, for many years, with hardly a Sunday's absence, had furnished the musical part of the religious services. Mr. Merrill Ellis led the choir, and accompanied it with a violin. Mr. Rufus French played on a bass viol. The choir was accustomed to take the pitch, before beginning to sing, by sounding the first, third, fifth and eighth notes of the scale. Mr. William King Gay, Mr. Horace Gay, Mr. and Mrs. Henry Gay, Mr. Theodore Gay,* Mrs. Mary Gay, Mrs. Bunker Gay, Mr. and Mrs. Anson Gay, Miss Delia White, Mrs. Caleb Ellis, Mrs. Martha Ellis, Miss Abby Baker, Mrs. Joshua Spear, were then, and for several years after, members of the choir. In 1857 the organ, which was built in 1821 for the First Parish in Dedham, was purchased for this society. It was opened July 12, and is noticed in a sermon delivered

*Mr. Theodore Gay was postmaster or assistant postmaster from March 1, 1824, when the Post Office was first opened in West Dedham, till 1879.

on that day. Twenty years later, in the spring of 1877, a new organ costing \$1500 was substituted for the old one. Five hundred dollars were allowed for the old organ. Eight hundred and eleven dollars and seventy cents were given by the Ladies' Benevolent Society, and the balance, one hundred and ninety-seven dollars and thirty cents was furnished by the liberality of a member and frequent benefactor* of this society.

The money given by the Benevolent Society was originally devoted to the enlargement and decoration of the cemetery,† but the action of the town rendering it unnecessary to apply the money to the purpose first intended, it was used to aid in the purchase of an organ. Some years since, a cabinet organ was purchased for the use of the Sunday school. Lamps were put in perhaps as early as 1866. It was the custom for several years to decorate the church with evergreen at Christmas, and to celebrate that festival in the evening with a tree, and with songs and recitations by members of the Sunday School. The church was also used for lectures during two or three winters. The erection of the hall in the new Colburn school-house, and the convenient accommodations furnished by Baker's Hall,

* Mr. Joseph Fisher.

† The first land for this cemetery was half an acre purchased in 1752 of Nathan Kingsbury. In 1820, land was purchased of Sabine Baker to enlarge it towards the south. In 1843 one addition was made on the east by land bought of John and Joshua and Chloe Fisher, and in 1860 it was enlarged by a tract of land purchased of Joseph Fisher. In 1843 a joint fair was held by the Baptist and Unitarian societies, and the proceeds were used for building the fence of the cemetery. The Ladies' Benevolent Society, in addition to this, have expended \$617.06 in the care and decoration of the cemetery. The Corporation of Proprietors was organized January 5th and July 9th, 1860, and the first appropriation made by the town for the cemetery was in 1868. As usual, there was, at the outset, great difference of opinion in respect to the location of the burying ground. When Rev. Mr. Tyler attempted to pacify two of his angry parishioners, one of them said: "I'll never be buried in that burying ground as long as I live and breathe." "Well," replied the other, "if God Almighty spares my life, I will."

now render such a use of our place of worship unnecessary. This place has never known a pleasanter occasion than that afforded by the meeting of the Norfolk County Conference in the summer of 1877. The house was crowded with delegates from the various societies in our vicinity. An eloquent discourse was delivered by Dr. C. A. Bartol in answer to the question, How shall we obtain knowledge of God? And the subject was discussed by other ministers. A marked feature of this conference was the collation given in a barn west of the church, which had been handsomely trimmed and decorated for the occasion. Seats had been placed along the floor and on the scaffold. Tables were erected at one end of the barn, and although the company assembled was twice the number anticipated, ample provision was found for all.

I have now given a brief history of our meeting-house. Let me next speak of the successive ministers who have been settled in this parish. More extended notices of their character and ministry than the limits of this discourse will allow, will be found in the centennial sermon of Rev. John White, and in the discourse delivered at the funeral of Rev. John White by Rev. Dr. Alvan Lamson. The first minister of this society was Rev. Josiah Dwight. He was installed June 4th, 1735, and was dismissed, on account of dissensions between him and the parish, May 20th, 1743. Mr. Thacher writes of him: "Mr. Dwight was supposed by his contemporaries to be a man of good natural abilities, and considerable acquirements in ancient learning. He was well versed in Old School Divinity, and was respected by the more enlightened as a scholar and a gentleman. Though a man of piety and virtue, he was singular in his manners. His peculiarities increased in his old age."

In 1743, just before the beginning of King George's war, Mr. Andrew Tyler was ordained as minister of this society, and continued in that relation till December 17th, 1772, almost exactly a year before the tea was thrown over-

board in Boston harbor. During his ministry occurred the French and Indian war in this country, and the Seven Years' war in Europe. The burdens imposed upon the colonists were heavy, and were increased by dissensions among themselves. Private animosities were carried into the churches, and distracted the attention of their members from the religious and moral culture which are the true ends for which churches are organized. Mr. Tyler and this society had their full share in these dissensions. He is described "as a man of handsome personal appearance, of polite and engaging manners and graceful address, highly gifted in prayer." From a perusal of two of his discourses, he seems to me to have been a well-educated man, and possessed of great fluency in the use of language. His sentences are long and involved, and full of parentheses. His discourses must have been difficult for his hearers to follow, and his style forms a striking contrast to the short, sharp-cut sentences of Mr. Thacher. The temper of the times, and the unpleasantness of the relation between Mr. Tyler and this society, may be judged by this extract from the parish records of 1772 :

"The laws of the province require that a minister should be learned, orthodox, able, pious, and of good conversation, but your committee is humbly of the opinion that the minister of this parish is very deficient in some of these qualifications. As to his learning, the committee, not being judges in that matter, can only say that some men of learning have given intimations that he was reckoned at college a very indifferent scholar, and ministers in general are looked upon to be much his superiors in that respect. As to his orthodoxy, the parish have never made any complaint, nor do the committee. As to his ability, which we take not to imply the same thing as learning, but is understood by us to mean the same thing as an able minister of the New Testament, that is, one apt to teach, who always feeds his flock, one able to convince gainsayers, who can comfort as well as reprove, one who can govern his own temper, and bear with the infirmities of others. In all these particulars, we consider Mr. Tyler deficient.

But what is most exceptionable, Mr. Tyler does not appear to be a man of piety and good conversation. He is frequently guilty of rash and unguarded expressions, of a disregard to truth. He has handled the word of God deceitfully, in order to level his artillery against those with whom he has been offended. He has been noisy, boisterous, and turbulent. In administering the discipline of the church, he has been partial through prejudice."

—*Worthington.*

We may well suppose that the controversy connected with Mr. Tyler's dismissal, and the burdens which the parish had borne during the colonial wars, left it ill prepared for the severer struggle of the Revolution. After Mr. Tyler left, it does not appear that any money was granted by the parish for the supply of the pulpit until March 8th, 1774. "A committee was then chosen to confer with members of the South Parish on the subject of congregating together on Lord's Days, three months from the succeeding April, in *their* meeting-house, and in the meeting-house of *this parish*, alternately. It does not appear from the records that this scheme was carried into effect." Large sums, (at one time £1200,) were levied on the polls and ratable estates of the parish in order to carry on the war, and its young men were called away to engage in military service. For seven years this society was without a minister, but just a century ago, in 1779, the year when the British were plundering along the coast of Connecticut, and Putnam took his famous ride down a precipice, and Anthony Wayne stormed Stony Point, and Paul Jones, after a desperate fight, captured two English frigates, the fortunate choice of Mr. Thomas Thacher for minister was made by the people of this parish. He was a man of remarkable ability, a good scholar in the classics and in history, an original, independent thinker, vigorous and outspoken in his speech, excitable in his temper, but ready to make amends by apology, when he seemed to have done another injustice. He was generous and hospitable to such an extent

that, at his decease, after a ministry of thirty-three years, his property was very small. His wit was keen and penetrating, and must have cut severely those who were exposed to it. Several of his sayings, and reports of his practical jokes, have come down through three-quarters of a century, and serve to illustrate the lines of Shakespeare :

“The evil that men do (or say) lives after them :
The good is oft interred with their bones.”

I have already quoted a passage from one of his discourses. Two other brief extracts will help you to form an idea of his characteristics. Speaking of the Apostles, he says :

“How different their conduct from that of modern enthusiasts and impostors ! What other proof of their authority do they give but their bare word ? What art or science are they masters of, unless that of fascination and deceit ? What credentials do they exhibit except impudence and low breeding ? Or, what miracle do they work, unless the number of fools and maniacs they collect to hear them vociferating their blasphemy and impertinence ? When men thus presumptuously run before they are sent, and intrude themselves into offices for which they are manifestly unfit, it is no breach of Christian charity to pronounce them impostors or self-deluded, and it is difficult to determine whether knave or fool is the predominant trait in their character.”

Speaking of the ministry in the hands of men destitute of talent and education, he remarks :

“In one solitary instance, we know our blessed Lord had *need of an Ass*, but I do not find from a syllable of the New Testament, that he ever commissioned that sagacious animal to be an Apostle.”

Mr. Thacher was a sympathizing pastor, a warm friend, a hater of cant, superstition and bigotry, one of the pioneers in that movement which, under Channing, Ware, and their compeers, led to the separate establishment of the liberal wing of the Congregational church under the Unitarian name. Mr. Thacher's pastorate continued till his decease, October 19th, 1812.

April 20th, 1814, Mr. John White, of Concord, was ordained, and began an acceptable, peaceful ministry of thirty-eight years. Mr. White's natural endowments fitted him eminently for the Christian ministry. He was a sincere believer, and a conscientious, faithful laborer in his Master's cause. He was mild, gentle, courteous and conciliatory; a man of refinement, good culture and purity. He was discreet and practical. The light of a mild, and charitable, and devout spirit shone in his daily walk and conversation, so that, I doubt not, his life was as effective as his preaching. He was thoroughly devoted to the welfare of his people, and spared no pains for their intellectual and moral progress. He was personally unknown by me, but it was my privilege to be acquainted with the one who very faithfully shared his labors, and made his home a house of hospitality, not merely a cheerful dwelling for his family, but an attractive place of resort for the members of their parish. I am glad to have this public opportunity to pay this imperfect but sincere and heartfelt tribute of respect and affection to the memory of Mrs. White.

She had, like Wordsworth's wife,

"The reason firm, the temperate will,
Endurance, foresight, strength, and skill;
A perfect woman, nobly planned,
To warn, to comfort, and command."

She must have been a wise counsellor to her husband, an energetic co-operator with him in his ministerial work, a cheering companion in his hours of depression and discouragement. Blessed with remarkable physical strength and health, which she seemed to carry into her old age unabated, and through which she performed an amount and variety of labor entirely beyond the ability of most women, she also possessed a lady-like grace and dignity, which enabled her to step from the garden or the kitchen and meet, on equal terms in intelligence, culture, and charm of conversation, visitors who had made these matters special

objects of attainment. She was an admirable household economist, an artist in all that relates to the furnishing of her house, or the setting of her table; a generous friend to the poor; a public-spirited member of society; a trustworthy friend. She was very active in procuring funds for the decoration and enlargement of our cemetery, and continued, after her husband's decease, to take a lively interest in the prosperity of the parish. Her death was consistent with her life. While engaged in collecting supplies for our soldiers wounded in the War of the Rebellion, she was seized with a severe cold, succeeded by pneumonia, and terminating with her death.*

The Sunday School connected with this society began during Rev. Mr. White's ministry. It was an innovation greatly opposed at first. Catechising the children by the pastor was the method then employed, followed by the instruction of graded classes by separate teachers, as at present. The ministry of Mr. White was terminated by his decease, February 1st, 1852. For nearly three years afterwards the pulpit was supplied by various ministers, and calls were extended to two or three candidates. December 6, 1854, the writer of this discourse was ordained as pastor of this church and society, and continued in that relation nine and a half years, till June, 1864, and was afterwards minister of the first parish in Dover, from June, 1868, to April, 1879. After a vacancy of two years, Rev. Henry

*During Mrs. White's residence in West Dedham, the Ladies' Benevolent Society was founded in 1831, January 1st. It began with eighty members, and those were invited to join who were "desirous to afford assistance to the poor within the limits of the parish." Mrs. White was president as long as she remained in Dedham. This society has spent, as gifts to individuals, \$1084.34; for the cemetery, \$617.06; for the meeting-house, \$577.68; for library, \$452.76; for organ, \$811.70. A Social Library was established in 1817, and the West Dedham Library in 1842. A Book Club existed during the greater part of Mr. Locke's ministry, and the Parish Library was founded in 1866. Large additions were made to the Sunday School Library from the proceeds of a concert given by the children in 1858.

Westcott accepted an engagement of one year with the society, and at the end of this time entered into pastoral relations with the ancient society at Lexington. Mr. Elisha Gifford received a call August 12, 1867, and resigned the charge of the parish March 11, 1872. He was subsequently settled at Presque Isle, Maine, and is now residing in Cambridge. Rev. Edward Crowninshield began his ministry the first of January, 1873, and closed his pastoral connection with the society, May 31, 1879. He is now settled over a flourishing society in Belfast, Maine. May 26th, 1879, the house* which he occupied, and which had been, at intervals, the home of the ministers of this society for twenty-five years, was burned, and the records of the church were also destroyed in the flames. Your pastors, subsequent to Mr. White, are still living, and it does not become me to make an estimate of their work and character. Our experience, I think, shows that frequent change is undesirable, and that each change, even when unaccompanied by any dissension in the society, results in a diminution in our numbers. Our experience teaches us to be very careful in

* This house formerly stood on the south side of Nahatan street, and was reached by a lane from Clapboardtrees street. Nahatan Hall was connected with it, and was used without charge by the owner, for the fairs, social gatherings, and ladies' meetings of the parish. It is a legend about this house that Moll Pitcher, an uncanny woman from Lynn, once stopped at it and asked for a drink of cider. Being refused, she said: "Your neck will snap like this," at the same time breaking the stem of her clay pipe. Shortly after, the man fell and broke his neck. It was also predicted that the house would be destroyed by fire. Near it, once stood the house last owned by Mr. Thomas Connor, which has also been burned. A house east of the church, once owned by Mr. David Ellis, and in which Rev. George and Rev. Rufus Ellis were born, has been removed. The first house built in that part of Dedham known as Clapboardtrees, stood opposite Mr. Greenwood Fuller's, and was occupied by Dea. Jonathan Onion. It is said a school-house once stood at the corner of Nahatan street, near the old church. One end of this school-house was occupied by a fire-place, and the scholars faced the side walls. At one period, the only school-house in the parish was near the present situation of the Baptist meeting-house.

the selection of our minister, and to give him hearty, efficient support and co-operation when he is established among us.

During the quarter of a century since my ordination in this meeting-house, some changes have taken place which are worth noting. Twenty-five years ago it was customary to toll the bell the morning after a death in the parish, first striking three strokes if it was a man, two strokes if a woman, and one stroke for a child, and then the age was tolled. The bell was also struck while the procession was marching to the grave. This custom went into disuse about 1868. It was also customary for bereaved families to have notes read by the minister on Sundays subsequent to a funeral, requesting the sympathy and prayers of the congregation. The annual parish meeting, in March, was opened with prayer. The Lord's Supper has also been abandoned, not I believe, from any low estimate of its value, but from a diffidence and reluctance to take a position which might seem to imply an assumption of peculiar excellence. I believe that this view of the Lord's Supper and church membership is groundless, and hope that soon this ancient rite, and the touching rite of infant baptism, may be renewed, and that the limits of the church may be as extended as that of the society itself. Public services on Thanksgiving Day and Fast Day have not been held since 1864. Previous to 1870, it was customary to hold two services, one in the morning and the other in the afternoon. In that year, it was voted that there be no service the first two Sundays in August, and no afternoon service in July and August, and that the parish committee be authorized to dispense with the afternoon service on stormy days. Not long after, the second service was entirely abandoned. The number of the congregation now, and twenty-five years ago, does not greatly vary. The number of families has considerably diminished. At that time, there were many aged members connected with this society, too old and infirm, many of

them, to be present at public worship. These have passed away, and their places been frequently taken by those who have not united with any religious society. I see by my visiting list of 1860, that there were eighty-two families to which I was accustomed to extend pastoral care. Now there is about one-half that number which the pastor of this society might be expected to visit. The existence among us of a large portion of the population that attend religious services nowhere, is not peculiar to this place. It seems to be an increasing evil, and needs to be met by vigorous and united efforts on the part of those who are interested in the maintainance of the means of moral and religious training.

Twenty-five years ! A casual visitor, even though a careful observer, might not notice any extended changes in our place during that period. There are the same areas of pasture, woodland, and cultivated fields. Not many dwellings have been erected, nor many removed or demolished. But compare the congregation that then assembled within these walls with the one that now meets here, and we see evidence of the busy hand of change. Many of those who were then actively interested in this society, men and women who were distinguished for integrity and moral worth, and sincere piety, and sweetness and purity of disposition, have passed away. Permit me to recall to your thoughts that procession which year by year has gone from us into the Silent Land. As I take the homes of the parish in their order, you will

NOTE.—Some changes in the occupations of the inhabitants may be noted. During the second war with Great Britain, large quantities of beef and pork were packed in West Dedham, and as the coast was blockaded, some of the men, among them Mr. James Pettee, Mr. Sammel French, and Mr. Colburn Ellis, drove horse or ox teams to New York and Philadelphia. The trip to the former place took three weeks ; to the latter, six. An iron foundry was standing in West Dedham about the middle of the current century, and during the Civil War malleable iron works did a flourishing business. In 1854, and for many years previously, the women in this town, and adjacent towns, sewed straw braid. The use of machinery has now entirely destroyed this occupation.

see that there are very few that the angel of death has not visited. The amiable wife of Mr. Allen Colburn, the aged Mr. Samuel French, Mrs. Hepzibah French, Mrs. Ezechieh Kingsbury, who made her humble home lovely with flowers, Mrs. Jason Gay, Mr. Alvin Gay, the aged Mrs. Dean and her daughter, Mr. Chas. D. Morgan, the venerable Capt. Jeremiah Baker, whose life continued nearly a century, and at whose house Mr. Thacher staid when he first preached as a candidate ; patient Mrs. Thompson and her group of intelligent and attractive daughters ; Miss Betsy Turner, the gentle Mrs. Ellis Gay, Mr. Merrill Ellis, for many-years clerk of the parish and leader of the choir ; Mrs. Achsah Shattuck and her daughter, universally beloved ; Mr. Leonard Mason, Mrs. Lusher Baker, the good wife and careful mother ; Mr. Nathan Phillips, the respected and upright citizen ; Mr. Alfred Baker, Mrs. Olive Guild, a mother deservedly loved and honored by her many children ; Dr. Howe, the kind physician, and his wife long prominent in connection with the Ladies' Benevolent Society ; Mr. George Draper, Mr. Henry Gay, a man who, with his father, Wm. King Gay, took a deep interest in the welfare of the parish ; Miss Lizzie Gay, who died sustained and comforted by the faith that she should at once join her father ; Mr. Caleb Smith, Mr. Newell Fisher, Mrs. Parker, the model of neat housekeepers, four of whose children are still connected with this society ; Mrs. Steele, Mr. Hartshorn Boyden, Mr. Horace Gay, Mrs. Johnson, Mrs. Sarah Allen, Mrs. Elizabeth Owen, Mr. and Mrs. David Boyd, Mrs. Amy Draper, Mr. and Mrs. Luther Cheney, Mr. Leonard Smith, Mr. James Pettee, the diligent reader and independent thinker ; his daughter, Lucy Pettee, remarkable for her social qualities ; Mr. Colburn Ellis, a leading man in the society and his wife distinguished for Christian gentleness and humility ; Mr. Rufus French and his wife so many years an invalid ; Mrs. Samuel Cheney, Mrs. Fairbanks, Mr. Seth Gay, Miss Amanda Cheney, venerable Mr. Jason Ellis and his cordial wife ; Mrs. Chloe

Fisher, Miss Clarissa Richards, her sister Polly Richards, and Mr. Avery Whiting, Mr. John Baker, ready of memory and fluent of speech; Mr. Hezekiah Turner, who died while ringing the bell for public worship; Mr. and Mrs. William King Gay, the honest and diligent Mr. Eaton Whiting and his estimable wife, and his son George, the patriot soldier; Mr. Joel Gay, Miss Sophia Gay, Mr. Richard Ellis, Mrs. Bailey, Mrs. Nathaniel Colburn, Mrs. Thaddens Gay, Mrs. Cobb, Mrs. Cynthia Kingsbury, Mrs. Katy Kingsbury, Mr. and Mrs. Lusher Gay, the benefactors of the parish, not merely by the bequest of their estate, but by their efforts and influence while living:—these are some of the names that I recall. These are the persons whose faces we miss as we enter your homes or meet together in this house. The recital of their names, taken in connection with removal of families to other places of residence, shows our numerical loss, but the greatness of this loss can only be estimated by those who knew intimately the steady trustworthiness, the discretion, the good judgment, the public spirit, the quiet, unpretending virtues, the gentleness, affection and religious trust, whose influence left behind a rich treasure in the hearts of surviving friends, is all that remains of those dear ones whose forms and faces we shall see on earth no more.

These men and women have labored: ye have entered into their labors. The problem which we have set before us in this society, and others of like character, is not an easy one. Our purpose is to have a religion without gloom, bigotry, cant, or superstition; earnest and devout, but without clap-trap and sensationalism; a faith without narrowness; a piety without asceticism; a high standard of morality, without self-righteousness or uncharitableness. We wish to use the world without abusing it, to be of the world and still to be kept from the evil in the world. We wish to engage in innocent amusements, and feel that God's blessing rests upon us in our gaiety and mirth and recrea-

tion. We wish, while we keep ourselves open to all the elevating and refining influences of the age, to its education, discoveries, art and culture, also to keep steadily with us a sense of God's nearness to us, and of his providence, love and care. We wish for freedom of thought, and on the part of individuals a sincere, conscientious search for the truth. We want a fellowship of hearts, a communion of souls, undisturbed by doubt, jealousy, or suspicion. We want unity of action, and we want the working power of every man, woman and child in this society, for the prosperity of our parish, and still more for the upbuilding of that spiritual temple within us, more majestic and beautiful than mortal hands can rear. My observation has shown that the destructive worm gnawing at the vitals of our smaller societies is private feuds and resentments. Somebody is slighted; somebody is neglected; somebody is criticized; somebody is censured; somebody's services are not appreciated; somebody is unjustly treated and spoken of; and somebody quietly stops attendance upon our public services, or ceases to use his peculiar gifts for the general good. This course is a natural one. The impulse towards it is one to which I am not myself insensible, but I believe the truly Christian way is to resist it. Lay aside resentments, forget and forgive the offences, perhaps unintentional, that have been committed against you. Take hold of the work for which you are best fitted. If you can do but little, your presence, your desire to be helpful, the sense of your approval, will encourage others. No child that goes into a corner and sulks, by himself, is happy. It is only when he forgets the plaything that has been broken, or the hasty word, or the angry blow, and joins with his comrades, that he has enjoyment. We must work together in order to be knit together. We must know one another in order to have mutual confidence. We must be mutually helpful, conciliatory, charitable, and kindly disposed, in order to be a living, and genuine, and thriving church of Jesus Christ.

Other men have labored. They have established this society; they have erected this house; they have contributed generously the means for the maintainance of religious services; they have been thoughtful for the long line of generations to succeed. Enter ye into their labors. Take up the tasks and the burdens which your fathers have left. Render effectual in your lives and characters the influences which they sought to transmit. Add the weight of your good character and exertions to the grand increasing inheritance which moves down the stream of time.

Other men have labored. Not merely the men of this society. We are "heirs of all the ages, and enjoy the long result of time." From this Bible, thirty centuries look down upon us. Patriarchs, prophets, martyrs, the apostles' glorious company, saints, reformers, good men and women of all times and ages, have hallowed the world by their presence, and made it easier for us to know the truth and follow duty. Jesus, the founder of the Universal Church, has left his example, his words, the influence and spirit of his life, for our inspiration. Let us enter earnestly, persistently, vigorously, into the labors of these generous, noble, devoted souls. Let us enter into their labors, and then shall we not hear in our hearts the sweet voice :

COME, YE WHO LABOR AND ARE HEAVY LADEN, AND I WILL GIVE YOU
REST.

WELL DONE, GOOD AND FAITHFUL SERVANT; ENTER YE INTO THE JOY
OF YOUR LORD.

NOTICE

OF

REV. JOHN WHITE AND MRS. DELIA J. H. WHITE.

By REV. C. C. SEWALL.

Mr. WHITE was born in Concord, Mass., December 22d, 1787. He was the son of Mr. John White, a beloved and venerated citizen of that place, and for many years a deacon of the Congregational Church there. He received his academical education chiefly at Exeter, New Hampshire. He graduated at Harvard University in 1805, and was, immediately afterwards, a tutor at Bowdoin College for one year. He completed his preparation for the ministry at Cambridge, and became the pastor of the Third Congregational Church, in Dedham, April 20, 1814.

One of the earliest and most marked traits of his character was a purpose and desire to live a useful and exemplary life; to acquire stores of knowledge, which might enable him to benefit and improve others, as well as to gratify, strengthen, and elevate himself. He resolved to cherish those affections, and practice those virtues, which would win for him respect and confidence, and encourage in others like purpose and determination. When a tutor in college,—as it is known to the writer,—he was held in highest esteem by one* of the most distinguished officers of the institution, who was his contemporary there. Of his ministry at Dedham, it can never be forgotten by those now living who shared its benefit and felt its influence, how devoted and faithful he was to the primary objects and sacred duties of the pastoral relation. Never ambitious of distinction for literary attainments, or for rhetorical display, and never covetous of human applause, he sought and labored with continual earnestness to convey to

*Professor Cleaveland.

the people of his charge clear views of divine truth, and to create in their minds right apprehensions of the duties and obligations incumbent upon them in all the relations of life ; to commend and enforce upon them those practical lessons of nature and of revelation, the faithful observance of which would give to their life a higher value, and to their hearts the sweetest peace. He discoursed to them in simple, yet forcible language, of the being, perfections, and providence of God ; of his relation to us all ; of his infinite love and unerring wisdom in all the revelations of his will and designs of his providence for the truest welfare and happiness of his children on earth. He told them of the mission and ministry of Jesus Christ, and of the wondrous purpose of his life and death ; of the spirit which he breathed in all his intercourse and experiences in the world ; and of the perfection of his example, in which we might follow his steps. His preaching was chiefly and eminently practical, and its effect was visibly and permanently beneficial to his hearers. Its character and tendency are still exemplified in the spirit and life of individuals who yet survive him. Its salutary influence was happily felt by others, who are now witnesses to his fidelity to their souls, and sharers of his joy in heaven.

We have had like knowledge of no one among his contemporaries in the ministry, whose record was more entirely free from any stain of worldly ambition, or of unfaithfulness to the highest ends and obligations of the pastoral relation. His uniform singleness of purpose and earnestness of endeavor to "make full proof of his ministry" in the spiritual health and prosperity of his flock, were happily productive of that inward peace which outlasts all human favor, and is infinitely better than all human applause. His transparent simplicity and sincerity, the calm dignity of his bearing, and the warmth of his affections, made him a favorite with all his associates in the ministry, and among his many friends in all the relations of life. He was accustomed, during many years, to receive into his family students from the university and elsewhere, to whom he devoted the closest attention as an instructor, and on whom he impressed a grateful sense of his deep interest in, and care for them, like those of a father. His home was a place of happiness to all its inmates, and into it nothing was admitted that would needlessly wound the affections, or embitter the thoughts of any resident there.

When worn with the labors of a long and faithful ministry, and enfeebled by the progress of natural decay in a frame never robust, yet never weakened by hurtful indulgences, he was suddenly smitten with fatal disease,* the same serene and trustful spirit, so apparent in his active life, continued its influence and its manifestations in the chamber sickness, and at the sure approach of death. Receiving the most devoted attention and anxious care of those dearest to him on earth ; sharing the tenderest sympathy and constant offices of kindness of his parishioners and numerous friends ; soothed by his own memories of the past, and by the testimony of a peaceful conscience ; sustained by Christian faith and cheered by Christian hope, he was soon released from his sufferings, and passed on to the heavenly rest and reward of a good and faithful servant of God and minister of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Of MRS. WHITE, it must be a pleasure to all who knew her, to recall the beauty and excellence of her character and life. Born in Williamstown, Mass., she early became the adopted daughter of one of her relatives,—the Rev. Mr. Holcomb, pastor of the First Congregational Church in Sterling, Mass. With the culture of her mind and development of her character, while in his family, she attracted the attention and won the esteem of all who frequently saw her ; and, having been recommended to Mr. White as most worthy of his affections, and peculiarly adapted to fill the place of a clergyman's wife, the attachment between them became mutually strong, and they were married January 1st, 1816. Seldom is it that a relation, involving so great responsibilities and attended with so much liability to curious observation, and often to unkind remark, which wounds the sensitive mind, is so happily freed from any cause of regret or unhappiness ; or is so constantly and fully accompanied with those satisfactions which best reward the faithful endeavor to discharge every duty, and to satisfy every demand upon the affections and the energies of one who ventures to fill it.

Mrs. White readily became, in every respect, a fit helpmate to her husband in all his pastoral and his domestic affairs. With a deep and lively interest in the education of the young, and a desire to increase her husband's moderate income, she added to her other cares and labors the instruction and discipline of a school, and there made her influence felt in minds then best fitted

to receive those impressions which would remain with them in after years. When the school had been relinquished, it was her habit to devote more of her time and thought to the leading interests of the parish, and by her warm sympathy, by frequent and familiar visiting among the people, and by wisely directed counsel and encouragement, she aimed to promote the growth of those aspirations and desires, which would render the instructions off the pulpit more beneficial to their hearers, and to form and establish those relations and attachments to their minister, which would best reward him, and advance their own moral and religious improvement.

Whatever might affect any of the people, whether of joy or sorrow, was of interest to her, and whenever sickness, suffering, or bereavement became their experience, her sympathy and helpful, comforting presence was quickly afforded to them. But it was in her own home, in all her domestic arrangements, and in the constant demands upon her there, that the disposition and ability of Mrs. White were most actively and fully developed. It was there that she drew and attached to her, in largest measure, the administration and cordial affection of those who observed her daily life, and shared the results of her endeavors to promote their comfort and happiness; of those who felt the inspiration of her bright mind and her tender, loving heart. Her home was the abode of warm and generous hospitality, and of pleasing attentions to all her friends and her many casual visitors. The professional associates of her husband were always glad of an opportunity to exchange pulpit services with him, and to renew the pleasure of a visit to his family. On Sunday evenings, often at other times,—but then in particular,—some of his familiar and long-attached parishioners would gather at his fireside, and there receive and impart those expressions of confidence and esteem which most gratify and encourage both the visitors and the visited.

In every proposition for the general benefit of the community, as well as for the parish, separately,—and many such originated with her—Mrs. White was amongst the most active and interested in the completion of them. In the exceedingly neat and appropriate church, where the congregation of worshippers now assembles, there will be, to many, touching reminiscences of her zealous and hopeful endeavors to replace its former aspect and condition by more tasteful arrangements and better accommodations; an ob-

ject, the completion of which was exceedingly gratifying to her and her friends, as it was, also, most worthy of commendation to the parish. In the beautiful cemetery, which now attracts the notice of every thoughtful passer-by, there will ever remain a memento of the tenderness of affection, and the zealous and untiring efforts of her who was largely instrumental in the repair and adornment of it. There the remains of her husband and of herself by his side, now repose, bringing to those who knew and loved them, many affecting reminiscences of their characters and lives, and the gladdening hopes of a blissful reunion with their sanctified spirits, in a better world.

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